



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ROCKFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT'S POLICIES AND TRAINING

Q. How often does the Rockford Police Department provide training to its officers?

- A.** The Rockford Police Department has a full time training division and certified training staff that provides training to all of our personnel throughout the entire year. Rockford Police Officers receive continuous training using examples of what constitutes reasonable force under varying circumstances.

The Rockford Police Department was a CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) certified law enforcement agency and is now transitioning to ILEAP (Illinois Law Enforcement Accreditation Program) certification.

Accreditation is the ongoing process whereby agencies evaluate policy and procedure against established criteria, and have compliance with those criteria verified by an independent and authoritative body. The independent and authoritative body for ILEAP is the Illinois Law Enforcement Accreditation Council. The criteria, or standards, are policy development guidelines that represent a level of quality service delivery. The true indicator of compliance, however, lies with an evaluation by trained, independent professional peers. The establishment of meaningful and professional standards and an evaluation for compliance to those standards are the two fundamentals of an accreditation program. The Rockford Police Department is scheduled for accreditation by ILEAP the week of July 13, to July 17, 2020.

In November 2018, the Rockford Police Department adopted the Ten Shared Principles developed through collaboration between the NAACP and the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police. The Ten Shared Principles were created in 2018 and represent treating everyone with dignity and respect, rejecting discrimination, building trust and strong relationships within our communities, endorsing the values of community policing, and supporting diversity within our organizations.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers trained in de-escalation techniques and how to use peaceful conflict resolution strategies?

- A.** Yes. The Rockford Police Department trainers teach de-escalation techniques and incorporate them into many of their training courses, to include, arrests, use of force and crisis intervention.

The trainers provide scenario based training where they evaluate an officer's ability to verbally de-escalate situations and provide immediate feedback and additional training when needed.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to use de-escalation?

- A.** Yes. Officers are required to de-escalate when appropriate.

Q. What is the Rockford Police Department's policy on the use of chokeholds or strangleholds?

A. The Rockford Police Department prohibits the use of chokeholds, strangleholds, neck holds, sleeper holds, the carotid control technique and the lateral vascular neck restraint (LVNR).

The Rockford Police Department prohibits the use of **ANY** technique where a person's breathing or blood flow is restricted in any way.

Officers who use a prohibited technique will be subject to discipline and could face possible suspension from duty or termination from employment.

Q. What is the Rockford Police Department's policy on using restraint techniques such as "hog-tying"?

A. The Rockford Police Department prohibits the use of "hog-tying" or **ANY** restraint technique that places a person in any position which restricts or interferes with a person's breathing in any way.

Officers who use a prohibited restraint technique will be subject to discipline and could face possible suspension from duty or termination from employment.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to intervene if they witness another officer using unreasonable force?

What actions would the Rockford Police Department take against an officer who fails to intervene?

A. Yes. The Rockford Police Department requires officers to intervene in situations where other officers are subjecting a civilian to unreasonable force.

Officers who fail to follow this policy and intervene when required, will be subject to discipline and could face possible suspension from duty or termination from employment.

Q. Does the Rockford Police Department have a clear and enforced use-of-force continuum detailing what use-of-force techniques and weapons are acceptable in a wide variety of civilian-police interactions?

A. No. The Rockford Police Department does not use a use-of-force continuum.

Rockford Police Officers are required to use *reasonable* force when any force is used to accomplish lawful objectives. Rockford Police Officers receive continuous training using examples of what constitutes reasonable force under varying circumstances.

The Rockford Police Department demands all officers abide by the *objectively reasonable force* standard established by the United States Supreme Court in **Graham v. Connor**.

Rockford Police Officers are required to de-escalate force to a lesser level when the lesser level of force becomes appropriate.

Officers who use excessive or unreasonable force will be subject to discipline and could face possible suspension from duty or termination from employment.

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GRAHAM V. CONNOR

The standard used to determine objectively reasonable force is articulated in the United States Supreme Court decision, *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386 (1989). The Graham decision holds that the reasonableness of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, without regard to the officer's underlying intent or motivation. The determination of reasonableness must be based on the totality of circumstances and must include a consideration that police officers are often forced to make split second decisions in circumstances which are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving.

The determination of reasonableness is not based on the 20/20 vision of hindsight. Personnel are not required to use the least assertive option and shall consider the following criteria when determining which level of force to use: 1. The officer's legal justification for stopping the suspect; 2. The severity of the crime known to the officer at the time force was used; 3. Whether the subject was an immediate threat to the officers or others; 4. How the subject was actively resisting arrest; and 5. How the subject was attempting to evade arrest by flight.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers ever allowed to use excessive or unreasonable force?

A. No. Officers are always prohibited from using excessive or unreasonable force.

Officers who use excessive or unreasonable force will be subject to discipline and could face possible suspension from duty or termination from employment.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers prohibited from shooting at moving vehicles?

A. No, the law does not prohibit police officers from shooting at moving vehicles.

Rockford Police Officers are required to use *reasonable* force when any force is used to accomplish lawful objectives.

The Rockford Police Department demands all officers abide by the *objectively reasonable force* standard established by the United States Supreme Court in *Graham v. Connor*.

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Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to exhaust every possible option before using deadly force?

A. No, the law does not require police officers to exhaust every possible option before using deadly force. Rockford Police Officers are required to use *reasonable* force when any force is used to accomplish lawful objectives.

The Rockford Police Department demands all officers abide by the *objectively reasonable force* standard established by the United States Supreme Court in *Graham v. Connor*.

Rockford Police Officers are required to de-escalate force to a lesser level when the lesser level of force becomes appropriate.

Officers may only use deadly force when they reasonably believe that the action is in defense of human life, including the officer's own life, or in defense of any person in imminent danger of serious physical injury.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to give a verbal warning to civilians before drawing their firearm?

A. No, the law does not require police officers to give a verbal warning to civilians before drawing their firearm.

Officers may draw their firearm and present deadly force when they reasonably believe that the action is necessary to defend of human life, including the officer's own life, or in defense of any person in imminent danger of serious physical injury.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to give a verbal warning before shooting?

A. No, the law does not require a verbal warning before shooting. Officers may use deadly force (shoot) when they reasonably believe that the action is in defense of human life, including the officer's own life, or in defense of any person in imminent danger of serious physical injury.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to exhaust all other means before using deadly force?

A. No, the law does not require police officers to exhaust all other means before using deadly force. Officers may only use deadly force when they reasonably believe that the action is in defense of human life, including the officer's own life, or in defense of any person in imminent danger of serious physical injury.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to report each time they use force against a civilian?

A. Yes. Rockford Police Officers must report all uses of force against civilians.

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers required to report each time they point a firearm at a civilian?

A. Yes. Rockford Police Officers must report all uses of force against civilians, to include the pointing of firearms.

Q. Does the Rockford Police Department utilize an early intervention system to identify officers that may have used unreasonable force?

A. Yes. Rockford Police Officers must report all uses of force against civilians.

All uses of force are reviewed by a supervisor and the commander of the department's training division.

All officer uses of force are recorded and tracked with an early intervention system which helps identify officers who may have used unreasonable force.

Comprehensive reviews of any officer identified as exhibiting behaviors potentially requiring intervention are conducted.

Officers who are identified as being deficient with use of force techniques are required to attend additional training to correct all deficiencies.

Officers found to have engaged in any misconduct are subject to discipline and could face possible suspension from duty or termination from employment.

Q. Do Rockford Police Officers use body-worn cameras?

A. No. The Rockford Police Department does not use body-worn cameras. We do use vehicle mounted cameras (dash-cameras) in our fleet of squad cars.

Q. What is the Rockford Police Department's policy on transporting civilians who are under arrest?

A. When transporting civilians who are under arrest, officers are required to do the following:

- Perform all transports with the safety of the civilian being of primary importance at all times
- Ensure all vehicles used to transport civilians are in safe operating condition
- Ensure civilians are seat-belted in accordance with applicable state law
- Ensure restraints do not aggravate or cause any injury or any undue pain or discomfort
- Be particularly mindful of and accommodating to civilians of advanced age, persons with a physical handicap, individuals who are sick or injured or anyone with a disability

Q. Are Rockford Police Officers trained to provide medical attention to persons who are injured during an officer's use of force?

A. Yes. Officers are trained to provide medical aid and/or summon professional medical assistance as soon as practical for any subject with an apparent injury or any subject who complains of an injury after force has been used upon them.

Q. Before hiring someone as a police officer, does the Rockford Police Department conduct a thorough background investigation on candidates to ensure that they do not have a history of abuse, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia or discrimination?

A. Yes. The Rockford Police Department conducts an in-depth background investigation of all candidates, eligible to be hired, before offering them a position as a police officer.

